REMARKS

Claims 4, 6 and 7 are all the claims pending in the application, claims 1-3 having been withdrawn from consideration and claim 5 having been canceled, as indicated herein. New claim 7 is added, as indicated herein. The Examiner maintains the rejections of claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicant's admitted prior art (APA) in Fig. 6 in view of Kowalewski (U.S. Patent No. 3,249,909). Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the APA in Fig. 6 in view of Kowalewski, and further in view of Hauchard et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,969,845), hereinafter referred to as Hauchard.

Claim 4 - APA/Kowalewski

The Examiner maintains his rejections of claim 4 for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. In response, first, Applicant maintains that it is improper to combine the APA with Kowalewski at least for reasons set forth in previous Amendments/Responses, including the Response dated September 5, 2002, for example. Further, Applicant amends claim 4, as indicated herein, and submits that neither the APA nor Kowalewski, either alone or in combination, teaches or suggests at least the combination of elements recited in claim 4, including:

> wherein a circumferential size of the molded portion from a part corresponding to the terminal connecting portion is continuously reduced, so that a rear end portion of the molded portion has a same diameter as a diameter of the sheathed wire, and
>
> wherein there is no increase in the circumferential size of the molded portion in a first direction parallel to a direction in which the terminal fitting extends, as the circumferential size of the molded portion is continuously reduced.

That is, the circumferential size of Kowalewski's molded portion must be enlarged, or increased, at least once from a part corresponding to the terminal connecting portion 16 "in order to provide a smoother gripping on the molded portion," which the Examiner alleges to be the reason why Kowalewski molded portion has its shape. *See Figs. 1 and 2 of Kowalewski.* However, Applicant's

invention, as recited in claim 4 recites that there is no increase in the circumferential size of the molded portion in a first direction parallel to a direction in which the terminal fitting extends, as the circumferential size of the molded portion is continuously reduced. Therefore, at least based on the foregoing, Applicant submits that claim 4 is patentable over the applied references.

Applicant submits that dependent claim 6 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 4.

Finally, Applicant adds new claim 7, and submits that this claim is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 4.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: February 19, 2003

APPENDIX

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 5 has been canceled.

Claims 4 and 6 are amended as follows:

4. (Three-times Amended) A terminal structure of a sheathed wire, comprising:

a terminal fitting;

a terminal connecting portion at a rear end portion of the terminal fitting at which the terminal fitting and a bare conductor of the sheathed wire is connected; and

a ~~fusiform~~ molded portion which covers and waterproofs at least the terminal connecting portion,

wherein ~~a part of the fusiform molded portion is made flush with a part of the terminal fitting~~ a circumferential size of the molded portion from a part corresponding to the terminal connecting portion is continuously reduced, so that a rear end portion of the molded portion has a same diameter as a diameter of the sheathed wire, and

wherein there is no increase in the circumferential size of the molded portion in a first direction parallel to a direction in which the terminal fitting extends, as the circumferential size of the molded portion is continuously reduced..

6. (Twice Amended) The terminal structure as set forth in claim 4, wherein the ~~fusiform~~ molded portion has a plurality of alternate concave grooves and convex ribs formed thereon in a direction parallel to ~~a~~ the first direction ~~that the sheathed wire extends from the fusiform molded portion~~.

Claims 7 is added as a new claim.